



## **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on  
**Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillors: T Hallatt (Chair)  
P Jousiffe  
S Barrell  
J Rook  
R Hodson-Gibbons

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk  
County Cllr K Oakes

### **SPC89/24/25 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

Apologies had been received and approved from Cllr Caston and District Cllr Marriott.

### **SPC90/24/25 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None had been received.

### **SPC91/24/25 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **SPC92/24/25 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2024**

**It was AGREED:** That the Minutes of the meetings held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **SPC93/24/25 - PUBLIC FORUM**

Four members of the public were present.

One member of the public reported that three trees at the churchyard were hanging low over the gravestones and would need maintenance works being carried out to them to cut them back. The Parish Council were asked if they could make a contribution to the costs involved.

Members advised that funding could be applied for from other sources, but would be happy to add it to the next Agenda for further discussion / decision.

Another member of the public, Emma Lister, reported that in relation to the replacement noticeboard at the village shop, she would be happy to liaise with the Clerk and suggest some companies quotes could be sought from.

Emma Lister also reported that congratulations needed to be given to the church for installing water to the church, a project that had taken seven years of funding raising to achieve.

### **SPC94/24/25 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Oakes' report had been circulated to the Parish Council prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Other than confirming that the flooding report for Needham Market had been received, the results of which had been disappointing, there was nothing additional to report.

### **SPC95/24/25 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

Cllr Marriott was not present at the meeting. Her report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

### **SPC96/24/25 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**Ref: DC/24/03698** - Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access point to be considered, all other matters reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of 1 No two storey self build Eco-dwelling, upgrade of existing vehicular access and landscape improvements - Land North East of Tudor Grange, Main Road, Somersham (part In The Parish of Nettlestead)

The applicants, James Edwards and Rhiannon Richards, were present at the meeting. They explained that the proposed Eco dwelling would be for them to live in. The proposal included improvements to the access to the site and extensive works to help reduce flooding of the site and surrounding area.

Members expressed concern over the flooding issue and stated that flooding would be moved further along the village unless drastic measures were taken.

The applicants fully understood the concerns and expressed their keenness to do whatever works were required to alleviate flooding in the area.

The applicants also reported that they had spoken to some of the neighbours about the proposal.

They explained that the meadow at the bottom of the site would be improved to ensure the public walk way through the site be improved so it would be a much nicer walk.

Cllr Hallett confirmed that the proposal would be kept on the Agenda for the next meeting as the Parish Council had obtained an extension for their comments until 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

### **SPC97/24/25 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

### **SPC98/24/25 – CRISPIN BRIDGE – ACCESS TO PLAYING FIELD**

Emma Lister had circulated the below report to the Parish Council:

Crispin Bridge - an access point to the Playing Field, close to the bus shelter on Main Road, Somersham.

It was deemed the official name for the bridge by the Parish Council some time ago – though this was never presented to Ordnance Survey. The bridge was clearly drawn, though not named, on their cartography. The details for Crispin Bridge in the village, with the plan to submit its name to OS, for inclusion in their mapping were as follows:

Name: Crispin Bridge  
Location: Main Road, Somersham, Suffolk IP8 4PF  
OS Grid Ref: TM 08826 48599  
Latitude: 52°5'47"N  
Longitude: 1°2'50"E  
Altitude: 21 m

A query had been raised with the OS Cartography team, and the OS Data Investigation team.

They had replied stating that a proper name could be added to mapping for foot bridges, but only if it was officially agreed/named by the local authority. It was therefore hoped that District Cllr Marriott and / or County Cllr Oakes could assist with this.

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council are fully in support of the registering of the name for the bridge.

## **SPC99/24/25 - CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that the email system that she used was not very efficient and she encountered problems regularly. She asked if she could as CFB IT Solutions, who hosted some of her other parish council email addresses to host one for Somersham, which would be a much more efficient system. The costs would be approximately £80 for the domain and set up of the email and then monthly payments of £5.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk liaise with CFB IT Solutions to set up and host an email system.

### **b) TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Clerk had circulated prior to the meeting the Council's current financial position and the balance in the accounts as of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024 was £78,780.25.

### **c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Aug)	£314.10
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Aug)	£26.00
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting	£715.00
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting	£380.00

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £1,435.10 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

### **d) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**It was AGREED:** That the Financial Regulations be approved and adopted

### **e) INSURANCE RENEWAL**

**It was AGREED:** That the insurance renewal be approved. **Clerk to action.**

## **SPC100/24/25 - LAND OWNERSHIP OF PLAYING FIELD**

In recent weeks there had been some uncertainty over the ownership of the land the playing field was on.

Cllr Oakes investigated and had received confirmation from Land Registry that the Parish Council owned the land.

Members stated that years ago there must have been a Deed of Trust put in place which was why the Community Association were now in charge of the playing field.

Emma Lister, Secretary, for & on behalf of Somersham & District Community Association (C&DCA) stated that she would investigate further with the Records Office, and the Clerk would look through all the documents she had.

## **SPC101/24/25 – NATURAL ASSET REGISTER – BOUNDARY OF PLAYING FIELD WITH PRINCES GARDENS**

Emma Lister had circulated a report

A resident of Princes' Gardens - whose home backed onto the Playing Field - had contacted the (S&DCA) regarding the green fence around the perimeter of the playing field, which sat about a yard behind the fences along the back of Princes' Gardens. This was an inaccessible void which wasn't currently being maintained. The report guided the Parish Council and the S&DCA regarding the action needed concerning the Playing Field boundary, and the situation for the neighbours along Princes' Gardens.

1. It included the void area, and how to clear it and access it for regular maintenance.
2. The information would be shared with Somersham Parish Council with the potential of a shared project.
3. Attending to the situation and its ongoing inclusion with the Playing Field maintenance programme would be achieved through dialogue with the boundary neighbours on Princes' Gardens, which may include the need to inspect the situation within their gardens - if that were the case, each household would be provided with advance notice.
4. Any such inspection would be to establish the practical steps to be taken, information provided, and an inspection by S&DCA had established the need for that.
5. S&DCA would write to the Princes' Gardens households concerned, outlining the situation, and invite them to contact the S&DCA with any further queries – S&DCA continued to keep each household informed as things progressed.

Cllr Hallett reported that any maintenance works which involved the Channel would need a permit from the Environmental Agency.

Members were keen to support the issues raised and asked that quotes for the works be brought to a future meeting for further discussion.

## **SPC102/24/25 – UPDATE - 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY 'THE STORY OF SOMERSHAM' BOOK**

Emma Lister reported that many residents had expressed an interest in helping with content for the book so it was looking promising for the project.

## **SPC103/24/25 - REFURBISHMENT OF PAVILION**

It was reported that a Topographic Survey would be needed for the project which would cost £690.

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council pay the survey costs using CiL money. **Clerk to action.**

## **SPC104/24/25 – COMMUNITY SHOP CAR PARK**

It was reported that the Environmental Agency had asked for further information and on further inspection were happy with the works that had been carried out.

## **SPC105/24/25 – NOTICEBOARD – COMMUNITY SHOP**

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

## **SPC106/24/25 – EMERGENCY PLAN**

There was nothing to report.

**SPC107/24/25 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

The following information had been received:

**May 2024:**

**Somersham** – 2 violence, 1 anti-social behaviour, 1 public order

**Offton** – 1 criminal damage

**Willisham** – No reported crimes

**Flowton** – No reported crimes

**Mid Suffolk South & West Area (Claydon and Copdock area)** – 63 crimes = 29 violence, 9 criminal damage, 9 Anti-social behaviour and 5 public order / thefts.

**June 2024:**

**Somersham** – 2 public order

**Offton** – No reported crimes

**Willisham** – No reported crimes

**Flowton** – No reported crimes

**Mid Suffolk South & West Area (Claydon and Copdock area)** – 77 crimes = 37 violence, 5 burglary, 12 Anti-social behaviour and 9 thefts.

**SPC108/24/25 – OTHER ATTENDED MEETINGS**

None attended.

**SPC109/24/25 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- Part of the Cycle Speedway World Championships would be taking place in Somersham in 2025!
- Tony Merter had informed Cllr Jousiffe that his recent proposal for his wife, a pianist, piano to be stored at the Village Hall and to be used for free music lessons / events had been refused by the Management Committee.

**SPC110/24/25 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting, the Annual Parish Council Meeting, would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.**

The meeting finished at 9.15pm.

Chairman: ..... Dated: .....